

FAITH'S KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

Does Jesus open the door to every sort of request that we may bring there? No indeed; he loves us too well for that. We ought to be just as thankful for what he denies us as for what he gives us. Selfishness too often comes begging at the gate of Prayer, with no better claim than the worthless tramp who assails our doors with his smooth, artful impositions. Christ knoweth what is *in* man; knoweth often what harm it would be to us if we could have our own way, and does us the supreme kindness to refuse our unwise requests. It is not humble Faith; it is selfish Presumption which marches up like a bank-depositor with his cheque, and *demand's* just what he wants. "Not my will, but thy will be done" has got to be inserted in every prayer we present, or the door will not open. Yet is there no certainty in that word "*shall* be opened?" Is all prayer a hap-hazard process or a blind knocking at a dead wall? No. For there are certain knocks to which the heart of the loving Jesus is never closed. He *always* opens to the penitent's sincere prayer for pardon; for whosoever confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall obtain mercy. To the hunted soul fleeing from the Adversary the gate always opens as a refuge. When we need help to discharge duty, and strength to carry inevitable burdens, he pledges to us the grace sufficient. And to every repentant sinner who flees to Jesus for salvation that door of love *shall* be opened. "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." I do not believe that there is a soul in perdition to-day which ever came to Jesus in the right spirit and the right time when here in its period of probation. The bare conception of a single mistake or a single falsehood on the part of the infinite Love would be too shocking to be entertained for an instant. Let God be true, though every man be a liar.

Sometimes it is for our spiritual benefit that there be a delay in opening the door. The Syro-Phœnician woman found that out; her faith grew stronger every moment that she was kept waiting. This is a part of our discipline. Our Lord does not cheapen his rich mercies by making them unconditional. Faith must learn the lesson of submission; and this does not mean a tame, indolent submission to evils which we can put out of the way, but an

entire acquiescence in God's withholdings as well as in his bestowals. Mercies grow sweeter also if there have been self-denials, and some trials of faith in the pleading for them. A dear friend of ours found the conversion of a beloved child was all the more precious because faith had been brought closer to Christ in beseeching for that child the blessing. Those discouraged Christians who pull the door-bell and then run away have really no claim to enter. Nor will the door open to any of us who seek to smuggle our darling sins with us. —*Dr. T. L. Cuyler.*

"I GAVE THEM MYSELF."

Said a mother to me one day, "When my children were young I thought the very best thing I could do for them was to give them *myself*. So I spared no pains to talk with them, read to them, to teach them, to pray with them, to be a loving companion and friend to my children. I had to neglect my house often. I had no time to indulge myself in many things which I should have liked to do. I was so busy adorning their minds and cultivating their heart's best affections, that I could not adorn their bodies in fine clothes, though I kept them neat and comfortable at all times.

"I have my reward now. My sons are ministers of the Gospel; my grown-up daughter a Christian woman. I have plenty of time now to sit down and rest, plenty of time to keep my house in order, plenty of time to indulge myself in many ways, besides going about my Master's business wherever He has need of me. I have a thousand beautiful memories of their childhood to comfort me. Now that they have gone out into the world, I have the sweet consciousness of having done all I could to make them ready for whatever work God calls them to do. I gave them the best I could—*myself*. —*Sel.*

"During a recent revival service," says a paragraph in an exchange, "a stalwart blacksmith rose and said—'I have heard a good many tell during these services about the prayers of their mothers being answered; but no one has said anything about praying fathers. It is a good thing that there has been so many praying mothers, but I am determined, by the help of God, to live so that my boys shall say they had a praying father.'"